



Public Notice

US Army Corps
of Engineers
Sacramento District
1325 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

Number: 200475580
Date: December 28, 2005
Comments Due: January 17, 2005

To Whom It May Concern: Review of a Prospectus for a wetland mitigation bank under Regulatory Guidance identified in the Federal Register, Volume Number 22228, Tuesday, November 28, 1995, Federal Guidance for the Establishment, Use and Operation of Mitigation Banks. This notice is to inform interested parties of the proposed activity and to solicit comments. This notice may also be viewed at the Corps web site at <http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/regulatory.html>.

APPLICANT: Ms. Denise Villa, President
Spring Water Ranch, LLC
2188 West Canyon Court
Grand Junction, Colorado 81503
(970) 254-8955

LOCATION: The proposed wetland mitigation bank is located near the Town of Molina within Sections 29 and 32, Township 10 South, Range 95 West, Mesa County, Colorado, and can be seen on the MOLINA, COLO. USGS Topographic Quadrangle.

PURPOSE: To provide the general public a location within a portion of the Upper Colorado River Watershed with opportunity to mitigate unavoidable impacts to wetlands and waters of the United States after all efforts to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts on-site have been exhausted.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: According to the bank sponsor, the proposed wetland mitigation bank would entail the restoration and creation of approximately sixty (60) acres of wetlands. Wetland restoration and/or creation will be comprised of three (3) primary wetland types identified within the proposed Wetland Mitigation Bank Service Area, including forested, shrub/scrub, and herbaceous (grass and grasslike). The completed wetland and aquatic complex would be designed to provide wetland functions which include but are not limited to flood attenuation, water quality improvement and wildlife habitat. The wetland and aquatic resources would be restored and created by a variety of techniques and standard mitigation practices. The wetland mitigation bank would be primarily constructed by excavating soil material to an elevation consistent with existing wetlands at the site, and replanting with native wetland plant species. Hydrology would be provided through the utilization of existing irrigation sources via lateral ditches and maintenance of current irrigation practices.

Additional irrigation laterals may be constructed to ensure site hydrology and fully exercise decreed water rights. Species diversity would be enhanced through the use of fill material from the excavation of ponds in order to ensure ground surface elevations would support the desired

plant communities. The alteration of ground surface elevations would also be utilized to create additional riparian buffers that would be planted to riparian woody plant species. Mature wetland plants would be harvested both on-site and from other wetland sites within the proposed project vicinity and replanting at the proposed project site. Additional nursery plant stock would also be planted to ensure adequate plant species diversity.

AREA DESCRIPTION: The proposed project site is currently operated for agricultural (ranching) purposes which include forage (hay) and livestock production (winter pasture). The proposed wetland mitigation site is located at an elevation of approximately 7,000 feet above mean sea and minor surface waters are tributary to the Colorado River via Cottonwood and Plateau creeks. The existing site is composed smooth brome grass (Bromus inermis), timothy (Phleum pretense), and Kentucky bluegrass (Poa pratensis). The existing structural diversity associated with the woody plants is below normal for this elevation, and representative willow (Salix sp.) species consist of small remnant populations and little or no occurrence of regeneration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The Corps of Engineers formally requested Federal and state agency review of the Prospectus for the Spring Water Ranch, LLC, Wetland Mitigation Bank on December 17, 2004. An on-site review of the proposed site was conducted on September 27, 2004, and a wetland delineation for the project site was verified on December 16, 2004. It was determined that approximately 2.21 acres of jurisdictional wetlands currently exist at the proposed wetland mitigation bank site.

The latest version of the National Register of Historic Places and its monthly supplements have been reviewed and cultural resources are not within the project's area of potential effect. The project will not affect any Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat that are protected by the Endangered Species Act. The above determinations are based on information provided by the applicant and our preliminary review.

The Corps is soliciting comments from the public, Federal, State, and local agencies and officials, Indian tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Interested parties are invited to submit written comments on the mitigation bank proposal on or before January 17, 2005. A copy of the Prospectus may be obtained by contacting NatureTech Consultant Services Corporation, Post Office Box 2736, Grand Junction, Colorado 81502, telephone number (970) 255-6508. Please provide written comments to Mr. Ken Jacobson, Chief, Colorado/Gunnison Basin Regulatory Office, 400 Rood Avenue, Room 142, Grand Junction, Colorado 81501-2563. For further information, please contact Mr. Jacobson at telephone number (970) 243-1199, extension 11, or email ken.jacobson@usace.army.mil.